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Grammy-winning Conductor Michael Christie Leads New West Symphony as Newly Appointed Music Director

Featuring music by Mason Bates and Schumann Plus Pianist Yulianna Avdeeva Performing Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2

Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 7:30pm | The Broad Stage in Santa Monica
Saturday, April 6, 2019 at 7:30pm | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza
Sunday, April 7, 2019 at 3pm | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Tickets (\$30-\$120) and more information: www.newwestsymphony.org

“Conductor Michael Christie melds fire and ice.” – *Star Tribune*

www.michaelchristieonline.com

Thousand Oaks, CA — On **April 4, 6, and 7, 2019**, Grammy-winning conductor **Michael Christie** leads the **New West Symphony** in his first performances as their newly-appointed Music Director. The program, entitled *Indescribable Beauty*, features music by Mason Bates, Frédéric Chopin, and Robert Schumann.

Michael Christie won a 2019 Grammy Award (Best Opera Recording) for the world premiere recording of Mason Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* with The Santa Fe Opera (PENTATONE). In celebration of this achievement, the program opens with **Mason Bates' *Garages of the Valley***, referring to the spaces in Silicon Valley that housed the visionaries who dreamed up of the biggest tech companies today – Apple, Hewlett Packard, Intel, and Google. Of the piece, Bates says, “The imagined music of these tech workshops begins hyper-kinetically yet sporadically, filled with false starts. The exhilarating finale reflects the infectious optimism of the great inventors of our time, who conjured new worlds within the bright Valley’s dark garages.”

First Prize Winner at the 2010 Chopin Piano Competition, **Yulianna Avdeeva** makes her New West Symphony debut performing **Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2**, showcasing sheer virtuosity at the keyboard. The program concludes with **Schumann's Symphony No. 4**, overflowing with German romanticism with great sweeps of melodic invention and pulsing rhythms.

Christie first led the New West Symphony in October 2018 performances of its “Rhapsody in Blue” concerts, celebrating the music of George Gershwin, and starring Grammy-winning soprano Sylvia McNair and renowned pianist Kevin Cole. His debut season, opening in October 2019, will coincide with New West Symphony's 25th anniversary season. “The orchestra members experienced tremendous chemistry performing with Michael, and along with the board of directors, expressed a great desire to have him as music director,” said symphony board chair, Kim Woods. “Michael is a great fit for our organization and we have full confidence he will be an artistic leader our community.”

Performance dates, times, and locations:

Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 7:30pm at the Broad Stage in Santa Monica (1310 11th Street)
Saturday, April 6, 2019 at 7:30pm at Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza (2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd)
Sunday, April 7, 2019 at 3pm at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center (800 Hobson Way)

Michael Christie is a thoughtfully innovative conductor, equally at home in the symphonic and opera worlds, who is focused on making the audience experience at his performances entertaining, enlightening, and enriching. *The New York Times* reports, “Michael Christie is a director open to adventure and challenge,” and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* declares, “If Michael Christie represents the future of music in this country, the future looks promising indeed.”

Michael Christie won a 2019 Grammy Award (Best Opera Recording) for the world premiere recording of Mason Bates’ *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* with The Santa Fe Opera (PENTATONE). In 2017, Christie led the world premiere performances at The Santa Fe Opera, “with suave assurance” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), with “precision and pizzazz” (*Santa Fe New Mexican*), and “preside[d] over an expertly executed performance” (*The Financial Times*).

Christie was featured in *Opera News* in August 2012 as one of 25 people believed to “break out and become major forces in the field in the coming decade.” At Minnesota Opera, Christie led 24 productions over eight years, six seasons as its first-ever Music Director (2012-2018). Highlights for Christie’s 2018-2019 season include engagements with Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater, Opéra de Montréal, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and Michigan Opera Theatre. 2019-2020 will be Christie’s first full season as Music Director of the New West Symphony, and he will lead operas with San Francisco Opera and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

Deeply committed to bringing new works to life, Michael Christie has championed commissions by leading and emerging composers alike, including Mark Adamo, Mason Bates, Michael Daugherty, Osvaldo Golijov, Mark Grey, Daron Hagen, Huang Ruo, Matthew Hindson, Marjan Mozetich, Stephen Paulus, Kevin Puts, and more. In 2018, he led the world premiere of *An American Soldier*, a two-act opera by Huang Ruo, with Opera Theatre of St. Louis. *The New York Times* reported, “Both the subtle colorings and pummeling intensity came through in the compelling performance the conductor Michael Christie drew from the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.”

Christie’s conducting career, spanning more than 20 years, has included serving as Music Director of the Phoenix Symphony (2005-2013) and Brooklyn Philharmonic (2005-2010), and as Chief Conductor of the Queensland Orchestra (2001-2004) in Australia, as well as guest appearances leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Rhode Island Philharmonic, and the Symphonies of Dallas, St. Louis, Atlanta, Houston, Minnesota, Oregon, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Santa Rosa. Christie’s many European engagements have included leading the Rotterdam Philharmonic, DSO Berlin, Orchestre National de Lille, Swedish and Netherlands Radio Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, NDR Hannover Orchestra and the Czech Philharmonic. In addition, Christie enjoys a strong profile in Australia, where he has conducted the Sydney Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony, Opera Queensland, and the Western Australian Symphony in Perth.

Michael Christie first came to international attention in 1995 when he was awarded a special prize for “Outstanding Potential” at the First International Sibelius Conductors’ Competition in Helsinki. Following the competition, he was invited to become an apprentice conductor with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he subsequently worked with Daniel Barenboim as well as at the Berlin State Opera during the 1996-1997 season. Christie graduated from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music with a bachelor's degree in trumpet performance. Christie lives in the Twin Cities with his wife, Alexis, a physician, and their two children. For more information, visit www.michaelchristieonline.com.

Founded in 1995, the **New West Symphony** is a professional orchestra that draws its players from the rich talent pool of professional Los Angeles-area musicians. The Symphony is the resident company of the Oxnard Performing Arts Center and the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. It presents six Masterpiece Series concerts annually, performing major works from the symphonic repertoire with internationally-acclaimed artists as guest soloists. The Symphony also provides quality outreach and educational opportunities for the communities it serves through its annual Symphonic Adventures concert programs for youth, its traveling Music Van, and the Laby Harmony Project, a year-round music and leadership program for underserved students.